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E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/29/2016
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SUBJECT: SARKOZY SAYS TACKLE DARFUR FIRST, CHAD SECOND

REF: 6/28 PARIS POINTS

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Josiah B. Rosenblatt. Reas
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¶1. (C) President Sarkozy decided in a June 27 internal meeting that France would focus first on advancing the UN-AU Hybrid deployment and on bringing clarity to AMIS finances before taking action on an MFA proposal for a French-EU-African force in Chad. Presidential adviser Romain Serman explained to Africa Watcher on June 29 that garnering broad support for a UNSC resolution mandating the Hybrid was the immediate GoF priority. Serman emphasized that Sarkozy had not yet signed off on the plan circulated by FM Kouchner for a multilateral EU-driven mission in Chad. If there was broader buy-in for an operation in Chad from key EU partners at the July 23 GAERC -- meaning MOUs on troop availability and not just a thumbs-up -- then Sarkozy might give the green light, but only if he were certain that France would not be left holding the bag.

¶2. (C/NF) Serman (protect) related that Sarkozy had reacted with real anger upon learning about the lack of AMIS accountability on funding. Although France had recently announced an additional 10 million euro to AMIS, the monies would be frozen until the AU took action on accountability; German and other EU-donor assistance may also be held up, Serman suggested. Echoing June 27 comments to Africa Watcher by Deputy Presidential Adviser and Africa Counselor Bruno Joubert, Serman reported that EU funds for AMIS had "vanished" in Addis Ababa (Ref); there was no reasonable explanation for Rwandan troops not to have been paid for months. Sarkozy, professing an obligation to the French taxpayer, had demanded that EU Commissioner Louis Michel deliver a firm message to African Union Chairperson Alpha Konare. Serman disclosed that Sarkozy had used colorful language to express his annoyance with Konare.

¶3. (C) Serman confirmed that France wanted to use its September UNSC presidency as a vehicle for making headway on Darfur. The GoF is considering holding a follow-up meeting of the Enlarged Sudan Contact Group on the margins of the UNGA in NY, possibly involving a Security Council meeting on September 25 to be attended by heads of state.

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